

WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the seventy seventh meeting of the Witham First District Internal
Drainage Board held at Washingborough village hall on Tuesday, 1st May 2012.

PRESENT:

Mr. R.A. Fletcher Chairman.
Mr. P. Gilbert Vice Chairman.
Mr. B. Applewhite
Mr. D.C. Armstrong
Mr. G. W. Chambers
Mr. S. F. Cobb
Mr. R. Coupland
Mr. J. Crust.
Cllr R. Cucksey
Mr. M.D. Harrison
Cllr. G Hewson
Mr. R.A. Hickling
Mr. B.S. Leggate
Mr. S.B. Leggate
Mr. J. Mair
Mr. L. Maplethorpe
Mr. N. Maplethorpe
Mr. N.A. Osborne
Cllr. C.R Oxby
Dr V. Stanton
Cllr. P. Vaughan
Mr. A.S. Whitehead

In Attendance:

Jane Froggatt - Chief Executive and Clerk.
Martin Shilling - Director of Operations
Alan Gardener - Engineer.
Anna Wilson - Finance and Rating Assistant

1682 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman advised Board members of the serious ill health of one of the employees who was now recovering well following surgery.

1683 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. D. Jackson, Mr. S. Maplethorpe, Cllr. J.F. Money, Mr. D.R. Means, Mr. E.H. Tonge and Mr. T. Gilbert.

1684 Declaration of members' interests.

Members of the Board appointed by City of Lincoln Council (Cllr. Patrick Vaughan, Cllr. David Jackson, Cllr. Gary Hewson and Mr. Richard Coupland) and those appointed by North Kesteven District Council (Cllr. R. Cucksey and Cllr. C.R. Oxby) declared an interest in matters relating to their councils. Cllr. C.R. Oxby also declared an interest as a serving member of Lincolnshire County Council.

1685. Minutes of the previous Board Meeting.

The minutes of the Meeting held on 7th February 2012 were approved as an accurate record.

1686 Matters Arising from the minutes.

1686.1 Branston Delph.

The Board was updated on a meeting between the Chairman, Chief Executive, Director of Operations and some members with local landowners and the Environment Agency held on 18th April 2012. Those who had attended reported the meeting as constructive with a number of positive actions agreed.

1687 Minutes of the Joint Administration Committee.

The minutes of the Joint Administration Committee held on 16th April 2012 were approved as an accurate record and the actions therein were noted.

1688 Minutes of the Executive Committee.

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 17th April 2012 were approved as an accurate record and the recommendations therein were noted.

1689 A.D.A. Local Authority members' seminar on 29.03.12.

Members received feedback on the A.D.A. seminar for Local Authority members of IDBs held on 29th March held in Peterborough and attended by the Chairman, Chief Executive and 4 members from across the Central Lincolnshire IDBs. The seminar had been opened by Henry Cator, Chairman of ADA. Presentations included the new Partnerships Funding regime at the EA from 2013/14 using 2012/13 as the transition year; the results of national consultation to 13.03.12 on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) by Defra; the work of the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Partnership by Peter Bateson of Witham Fourth IDB and David Hickman from LCC; the EA's Asset Maintenance Protocol being developed to focus maintenance on critical infrastructure or where there is a clear economic case to do so. The EA's presentation had been controversially received by the IDB audience amongst fears that the EA withdrawing its permissive powers to undertake works would put pressure on other flood risk management authorities.

1690 Lincolnshire A.D.A. Branch AGM.

Feedback was given on the ADA Branch AGM held near Louth on 19th April 2012 as follows:

- Norman Osborne was re-elected Chairman.
- Richard Leggate was re-elected Vice Chairman.
- Three Branch members were elected to serve Lincolnshire on the A.D.A. Executive Committee,
James Epton.
Richard Leggate.
Peter Pridgeon.
- Ian Moodie gave a national perspective on the work of A.D.A. which included the ADA Gazette being taken in-house, a series of booklets having been published with the first topic energy supply and finally consultations responded to including SuDs, reservoirs regulation, the national flood water strategy and the new planning policy framework.
- Report on Lincolnshire's Flood Risk and Drainage Partnership from Steve Willis, LCC's Head of Highways and Flood Risk Management.
- Changes to the Land Drainage Act 1991 by David Sisson and the consents and enforcements trial from 06th April 2012 whereby IDBs are undertaking the function on behalf of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in agreed extended catchment areas.
- Work of the Environment Committee was outlined by Martin Redding of Witham Fourth IDB.
- Lincolnshire Show Committee's work and new format for 20th and 21st June 2012 was outlined by Norman Osborne and Martin Shilling.
- Pay and Conditions Advisory Committee's work was summarised by Karen Daft, Secretary.
- Presentation on flood alleviation schemes for Louth and Horncastle by Ian Russell of the Environment Agency.
- Branch accounts presented by Peter Bateson and approved.
- The Branch then hosted a tour of Louth, including the two water storage sites planned as the flood alleviation scheme.

1691 Consents and Enforcements trial of Lincolnshire IDBs providing a service for the Lincolnshire Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in extended catchment areas.

A paper was presented which set out the basis of a proposed 12 months trial from 06 April 2012 whereby the IDBs in Lincolnshire provide the consents and enforcements service for and on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council (the LLFA) in extended catchment areas outside their drainage districts. The paper demonstrated the extended catchment area for the Board and outlined the range of issues being discussed by the IDBs with Lincolnshire County Council (eg training required, scheme of delegation, clarity as to powers of entry on to land, time and cost pressures).

After full discussion members agreed to participate in the 12 months trial noting that there would be a part-year review plus that a Memorandum of

Understanding between LCC and the Board was in development would come to a future meeting for approval.

1692 Financial Report to 29.02.12 of 2011/12 (month 11).

A financial report to 29th February 2012 was presented showing the Board's income position at £692,219 against an income budget of £681.078 and a projected 31st March 2012 income position of £696.897. Against this, expenditure to 29th February totalled £544,392 against a total budget of £593.887 and a projected 31st March 2012 outturn position of £594.535. In terms of bank balances as at 29th February 2012, these totalled £423,044.57 (£270,001.85 in Co-op Bank and £153,042.73 in a NatWest Bond, to be reinvested shortly).

Members noted the position and that work would start after 31st March 2012 to effect closure of the 2011/12 Accounts by 31st May, to enable Auditors to review the accounts before Board approval was sought on 27th June.

1693 Schedule of Expenditure.

The Board received and noted the schedule of Expenditure 01st January 2012 to 31st March 2012 which depicted recharges between Boards. The total net expenditure for the Board for the three months period was £187,946.04.

1694 Ratepayer Account write-offs and accounts uneconomical to collect.

Members received detail on 3 accounts deemed uneconomical to collect, at under £2.50 each, totalling £4.36 and agreed to write these off.

Members also received detail of land in a flood storage area, i.e. Branston Island, and agreed to write-off a total of £1,225.35 in rates.

Finally members agreed to transfer 2 fields, with an annual rateable value totalling £159.92 to NDKD's Special Levy and to write off rates of £13.44 in respect of this land.

1695 Pay Settlement 2012/13.

At the ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting on 24th February 2012 it had been announced that the pay settlement for 2012/13, applicable over all wage and salary scales from 01 April 2012 is 1.71%. This represents year 3 of a three years pay agreement. In year 1 it was 1.44% (2010/11) and in year 2 it was 1.89% (2011/12). The figure of 1.71% for 2012/13 is calculated as 90% of the National Average Earnings increase as published in The Sunday Times on the third Sunday in January each year.

The Board noted the year 3 pay settlement of 1.71% (which was within the budget uplift planed of 2%) and tasked the Chief Executive with implementation across all wage and salary scales with effect from 01 April 2012.

1696 Motor Vehicle Allowances.

A paper was presented which set out the history as to how the current motor vehicle allowances policy had been developed in 1996 and on what basis it operates. The Board was also advised that following a review, the ADA Lincolnshire Branch had accepted a new policy on 24th February 2012 and commended this for local implementation by Boards.

The new motor vehicles allowances policy is based on paying essential and casual users the HMRC rate of 45 pence per mile and an Essential User Allowance based not on engine cc size but on bands of new vehicle purchase price. The paper demonstrated that the new scheme could save the Board £1,983.63 per annum if implemented.

There was considerable discussion about the pros and cons of the existing and new schemes. The Board is one of a few Lincolnshire Boards which does not currently pay its workmen an essential user allowance. There was genuine concern about the potential loss of flexibility of the workforce at times of a flood event, the principle of taking benefits away from staff having given them, of relationships with Trades Unions who apparently had not been consulted prior to the new policy being agreed and of rising fuel and cost of living costs.

After debate, members agreed Option 1 in the report, to remain on the existing motor vehicles allowances scheme coupled with freezing the existing rates payable for 2012/13. The position to be reviewed in one year.

1697 Elections Timetable 2012.

Members received and approved an Elections Timetable for 2012 (to 1st November). The Chief Executive was nominated as Returning Officer.

1698 Bridges and Culverts liability and potential assets transfer to LCC.

The Board received a detailed report from the Engineer regarding liability for 18 bridges and culverts within the district and the sum of £405,646.79 LCC is seeking from the Board to transfer future liability to them. The issue had been raised by LCC in 2007, 2009 and again in 2011. To date the Board's Engineer has identified a net reduction in the sum of £38k but further work needs undertaking and verifying with LCC. It is intended that a final report will come to the Board either on 27th June or 07th August 2012.

1699 Five Mile Development at Washingborough.

A paper was presented highlighting that the Board is to adopt the infrastructure for a commuted sum, under an agreement with Campbell Construction, as and when the Engineer signs to confirm works as fit for purposes after a 12 months defects period.

The Engineer outlined recent problems on site experienced by the Contractor in seeking to install the oil interceptor.

The situation remains far from satisfactory and whilst the Engineer is happy to advise how works should be carried out, he is unable contractually to require this.

The Board noted the position and that the Engineer will monitor the situation closely and continue to update the Board.

1700 Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's report for April 2012 was presented which in summary covered the following:-

- EA's precept for 2012/13 frozen at 2011/12 rate (£83,031 for the Board).
- Internal Audit draft report on 2011/12 received and when agreed will come to the Board on 27th June 2012.
- Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Group meeting outcomes from 21.02.12.
- EA's Anglian Vegetation Framework procurement process required the Board to submit an application by 22.03.12, this was done.
- Lincolnshire Local Government Pension Scheme annual meeting on 06.03.12.
- Lincolnshire Clerks' Meeting on 14.03.12.
- Lower Witham Strategy meeting convened by the EA on 17.04.12.
- Branston Delph site meeting on 18.04.12.
- Rate arrears at Lincoln Magistrates Court on 28.03.12 (6 cases for the Board, totalling £2,897.01).
- Meeting with Sills and Betteridge on 20.03.12.
- LLFA Consents and Enforcements meeting with the EA and IDBs on 26.03.12 re the proposed trial from 06th April.
- ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting 24.02.12.
- ADA Seminar for LA members 29.03.12.
- ADA Lincolnshire Branch AGM on 19.04.12.
- Land Tribunal Service meeting on 12.04.12 regarding a drainage dispute between two landowners at Billingham.
- Visit to Dogdyke Pumping Station Preservation Trust on 23.04.12.
- Heavy rainfall over the weekend of 21st April.

1701 Director of Operations' Report.

The report highlighted the planned summer maintenance programme with the final reaches on Digby Bankside and Dorrington Bankside being completed in early March 2012.

The winter 2011/12, de-silting programme completed 9.5 miles by Easter of the total 11.3 miles planned for the whole season.

Substantial bushing work has been completed on the Black Barn Drain, uphill of Chapel Pumping Station.

At Timberland Pumping Station pump motor No.1 was removed for repair following its complete failure. The re-wind job is complex, time consuming and will be costly and the repair also includes the re-fabrication of the heat exchanger. As a result, it has been agreed to subject the Board's remaining motors to an electrical load test to identify any motors which may be demonstrating signs of fatigue or potential failure.

With the odd exception, rainfall has continued to be lower than in previous years.

The Director of Operations then went on to outline the outcome of a procurement process for a new weedbucket. He recommended that the Board purchase a Mastenbroek Herder bucket, in the sum of £5,700 plus V.A.T. This was the second cheapest of four tenders received but was compatible with existing equipment. The Board agreed to accept this tender.

1702 Schedule of Planning Applications.

The Board noted a report setting out the planning applications received and the comments submitted to Local Planning Authorities.

1703 Any other Business.

1703.1 Travel Claim Forms.

Copies of travel claim forms were made available should members wish to complete and submit these for 2011/12.

1703 2 Summer Inspection to JCB on 27th June 2012.

Members were reminded to indicate whether they are attending the JCB visit.

1704 Date, time & place of Next Meeting.

The next Meeting of the Board was confirmed for Wednesday, 27th June at 9am from Haverholme Farm, NG34 9PF (between Anwick and Evedon) on Wednesday, 27th June 2012 and incorporating a visit to JCB.

.....Chairman..... Date
Mr. R.A. Fletcher.

JEF/KD
W1 Minutes 01.05.12